

The image is a complex digital collage. At the top, the word "BULGARIA" is written in large, 3D, reddish-brown letters with a black outline, set against a blue sky with white clouds. Below the text, a large, dark, rectangular area contains a perspective grid of thin blue lines that converge towards a central point on the horizon. Above this grid, a bright, glowing sun or moon is visible. To the right of the grid, a man in traditional Bulgarian folk costume (a dark vest over a red shirt, dark trousers, and a dark cap) is playing a baglamas, a traditional stringed instrument. He is standing next to a waterfall. The background of the entire image is a lush green forest with a stream and fallen leaves. The overall composition is layered and surreal.

BULGARIA

WITH
NEW
FACE[®]

TOURISM

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BULGARIA

PARADISE CHARMING HEARTS FOR EVER

Lying in the heart of the Balkans, on the crossroads between Europe and Asia,

Bulgaria is a land of striking nature, ancient history, expressively rich culture, vivid style folklore and charming traditions Bulgaria is world famous with its seaside resorts, offering infallible combination of climate and nature for summer and year-round holidays. Bulgaria is spread over a small territory - 110 000 sq.m., but the unique combination of geographic situation, natural facts including mountains and sea, multiform heritage of natural phenomena, historical monuments, settlements and towns, ancient archeological excavations make the country an attractive center for tourists from all over the world. Tourism is one of the most perspective branches in Bulgaria. The country has more than 7000 tourist spots giving a detailed picture of Bulgaria as a tourist country able to satisfy the most fastidious tastes. On Bulgarian territory are situated 16 mountain massives and each one of them is unique with its charming nature, historical inheritance, flora and fauna. Mountain and sea resorts make possible all year rest for both: for people enjoying in noisy and splendid experience, as well as for persons preferring silence and leisure. The beach strip, extended on over than 380 km, with typical spacious beaches, breezy groves and a great number of mineral springs, affords ideal conditions for holidays. The Bulgarian sea is called "black", but as a matter of fact in most months of the year is azure, calm and still. Besides our world famous traditional ski and marine tourism (by such resorts as Borovetz, Pamporovo, Bansko, Albena, Sunny beach, Golden sands, etc., traditionally participating in all international tourist exchanges), the country has firm traditions in activities such as hunting tourism, business and congress tourism. The necessary tourist equipment is well developed, more than 130 thousand beds available, besides the base of holiday houses, villa settlements, etc.

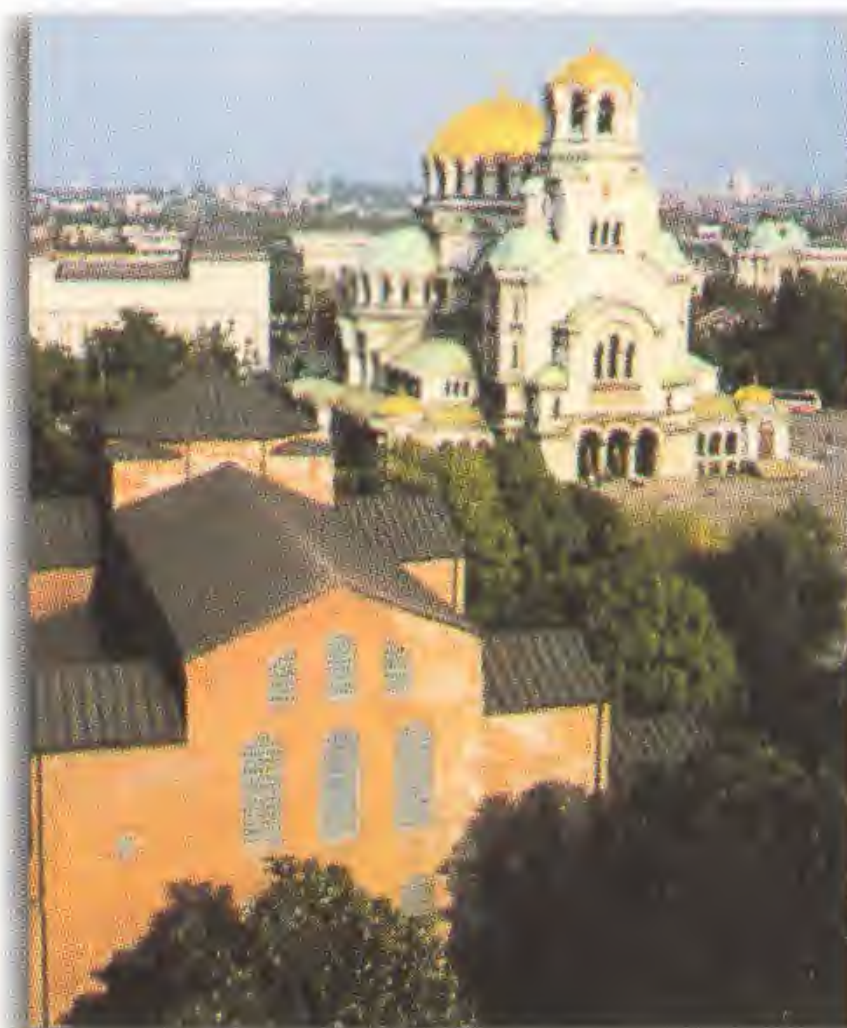
Bulgaria ancient and young

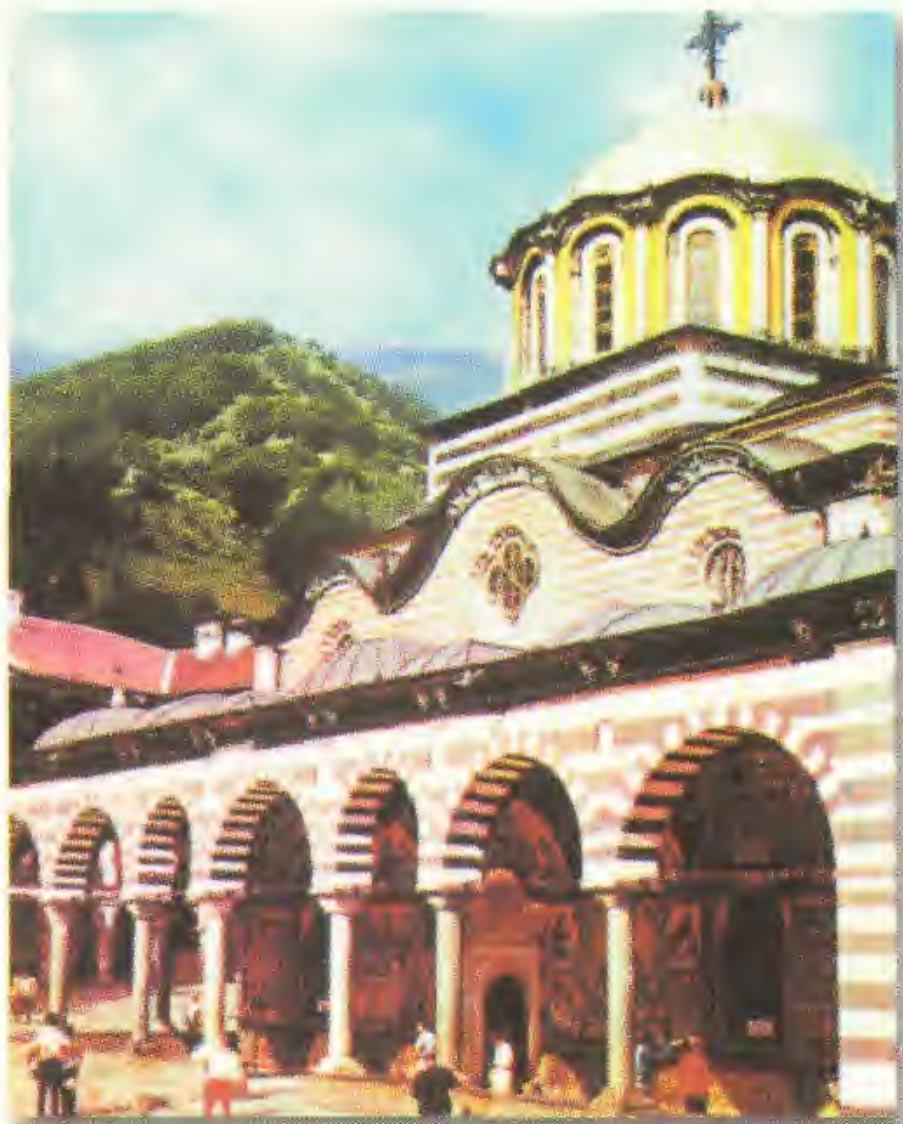
Bulgaria is one of the most ancient European countries, established in 861. Then in Europe existed only two countries - the West Rome Empire and the East Rome Empire (Byzantium). The country is placed on the cross-road between the East and the West, so that left a profound imprint on its total historical development and culture. On Bulgarian territory are found the most ancient in human culture gold polishing samples.

In the past Bulgarian lands were inhabited by Thracians. The ancient and enigmatic culture of this population is revealed in its entire pomp when going down into millennial history. The Thracian golden treasures are world famous by their beauty. From 300 culture monuments and natural phenomena, included into UNESCO's List of World Inheritance, nine of them are in Bulgaria.

Towns - Museums

That towns are all over the country. They have preserved the millenary memory and telling reminiscences of dramatic ups and downs of Bulgarian fate. The national genius has created unique and original architecture styles, closely connected to Bulgarian life-style and to the conception of beauty and harmony. Towns - museums, such as Koprivshtitza, Bojentzi, the ancient Plovdiv, Triavna, Kotel, Jeravna, Arbanasi, Melnik, Bansko, Sozopol, Nessebar represent different original ensembles that have collected in themselves the beauty of Bulgarian country and the ambition of Bulgarians for harmony between man and nature.





Monasteries in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria are preserved and are active more than 190 monasteries and churches being a specific and valuable tourist resource. They are placed in attractive natural environment and decorated by talented self-educated painters. The gentle nimbus of Bulgarian icons is an impressive measure of fate, stability and spiritual evolution of Bulgarians. The Boyan church, presenting the beginning of portrait painting of European art, as well as the imposing Rila monastery are included into UNESCO's List of World Inheritance. They are the real strongholds of the nation's cultural survival during the turbulent and dramatic events which blended the history of Bulgaria.

Bulgaria wealth of mineral water

Bulgaria has more than 550 mineral water springs with a daily discharge rate of over 178 000 m³, many of which rival the waters of the world foremost spa resorts. The waters' slight mineral impregnation considerably increases their therapeutic effect. Their chemical composition is widely miscellaneous - practically, every known type of mineral water could be found in Bulgaria. Bulgarian spa resorts occupy some of the most beautiful spots in the country making an excellent addition of phytotherapy, electrotherapy, ionotherapy, fruit therapy and application of medicinal herbs to spa and climatic treatment. The inland spas of Hissarya, Velingrad, Pavel Banya, Vurshets, Sandanski, etc are widely popular.

Business tourism

Bulgaria has good traditions as a center for business and congress tourism. Special business centers in Sofia and Varna, Fire Complex in Plovdiv and lot of high category hotels in the bigger towns and in the seaside and mountain resorts offer halls and audience chambers, modern technical equipment, first class service, interesting programs, excursion and entertainment for holding international congresses, symposiums, meetings, workshops, fairs, etc.

Hunting tourism

Bulgaria is the natural habitat of 14 per cent of all European animal resources and the country is a focal point for hunters from Europe and other continents. Seven of the best trophies in the world come from Bulgaria. The boasts over 200 hunting grounds of various character - from sub-Alpine to flat woodland and maritime.

GOOD LUCK IN BULGARIA.

Bulgarian national meals

It's impossible to get acquainted with Bulgaria without tasting the aromatic, varied and tasteful cooking rich in exotic meals and able to satisfy the most discriminating tastes.

Bulgarian cuisine is rich in its variety. Dishes are savoury and spicy adding more vegetables and herbs. Bulgarian dishes are different - both familiar and unknown.

Bulgarian crafts

The Bulgarian's innate aesthetic sensitive creates art from every kind of materials. The desire for beauty made people to work out tools decorated with figures and lines and wood carvings in various shapes. Crafts in Bulgaria are more than 50. **Pottery** is perhaps the oldest Bulgarian craft. Etching, color painting and applications are the usual methods. The most typical shape of Bulgarian pottery is the jug, with an elongated, delicate neck, glazed in yellow and green. **Wood-carving** is of an applied and artistic nature. There are two main types of wood-carving: small-surface and large deep wood-cuts. **Coppersmithery** is a pronounced artistic craft, having its heyday during the 18th - 19th century when methods of decoration became more numerous. Goldsmithery is an art whose works are purely decorative. Even in fashioning of tableware, the artistic element dominates. The beauty of crafts coming from the past is still alive and its articales can be seen and bought in the old crafts centres (Etara, Bozhentsi) as well as in craft streets of Plovdiv, Veliko Tarnovo, Sliven and many other towns.

Trimona Folk formation - performs authentic and author's folklore, including music, songs and dances. Its actors have graduated the Plovdiv Academy for Musical and Dance Arts. Participates in folk programs, international exhibitions and festivals.



5, Enissey Str., floor 3, flat 5
4004 Plovdiv, Bulgaria
Mrs. Galya Petrova : Tel: ++359 32/ 767 614
Mr. Temelko Ivanov : Mobile phone: 48 / 905 962

Bulgaria - a country of unique folklore traditions

The national traditions have been carefully conserved and enriched throughout ages to reach us totally refined and distinctive. Bulgarian folklore ensembles spread to all points of the world the beauty of Bulgarian folk songs and folk dances. People might see live and feel the Bulgarian folklore in order to find the key to Bulgaria. Typical for the country are the so-called ritual festivals - "kouker" processions, "nestinar" dances on live coal, dances to the accompaniment of St.Lazar's Day songs, for health, happiness and fertility, etc. Folk festivals and customs - Trifon Zarezan, Kukery, Martenitsi, Lazaruvane. The vivid national costumes, typical for each region, make the acquaintance with Bulgaria unforgettable for lifetime.



THE

PHILIP KOUTEV

NATIONAL FOLKLORE ENSEMBLE FOUNDED IN 1951

...There exists the myth that Orpheus was born where now Bulgaria is. It seems that this must be a fact and not a myth, for his daughters are still singing there.

The New York Times



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SOFIA

THE PULSE OF BULGARIA

SOFIA is the capital of the Republic of Bulgaria and the largest city in the country. The city dates since seven millennia. Its 250 archaeological monuments reveal its historical development since Thracian times.

At the very centre of the city can be seen the remains of the fortified walls of ancient Serdika dating back to the second century and the Rotunda "St. Georgi", one of the rarely encountered architectural sites consisting of buildings and streets from the Romans. The Rotunda was built in the II - III century and has been destroyed several times.

There are many theaters, museums, art galleries, opera, universities. Sofia is famous with a lot of churches, they all are interesting monuments, both historically and architecturally. The Alexander Nevski cathedral is one of the most attractive landmarks of the city for every visitor to Sofia. It's magnificent structure and valuable murals and icons, created by famous masters, arouse great admiration. The night life in Sofia is diverse - from the opera and ballet, to different style restaurants and night clubs.

Sofia is a city combining its millennial history with dynamic present days in its diversity, like its motto says, "GROWING BUT NEVER GETTING OLD".

Restaurant "Detelina-Operata"

is on the 5th floor of a historical building in the center of Sofia, with a beautiful terrace.

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Bulgaria
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SITA SOFHCLZ

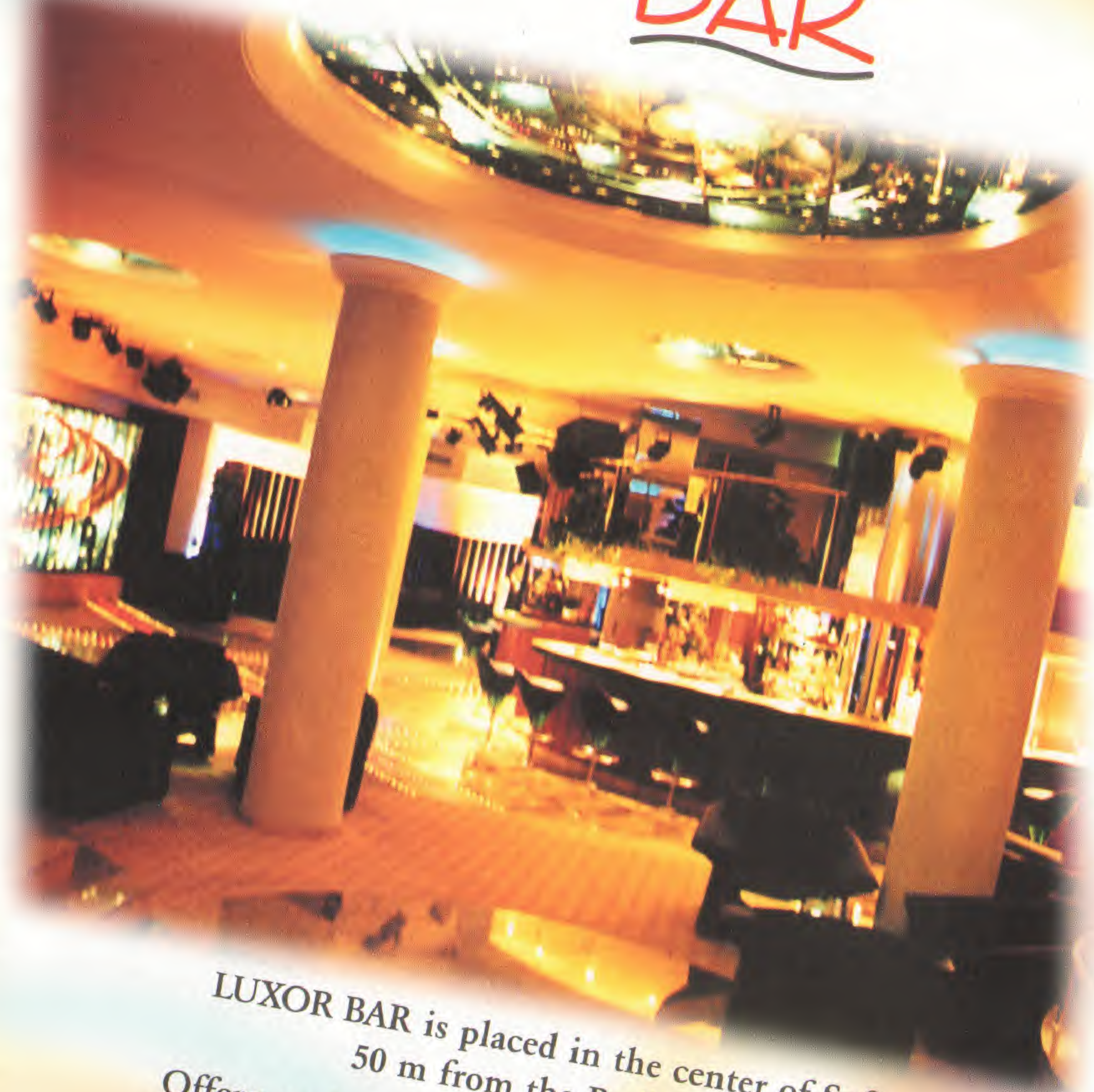
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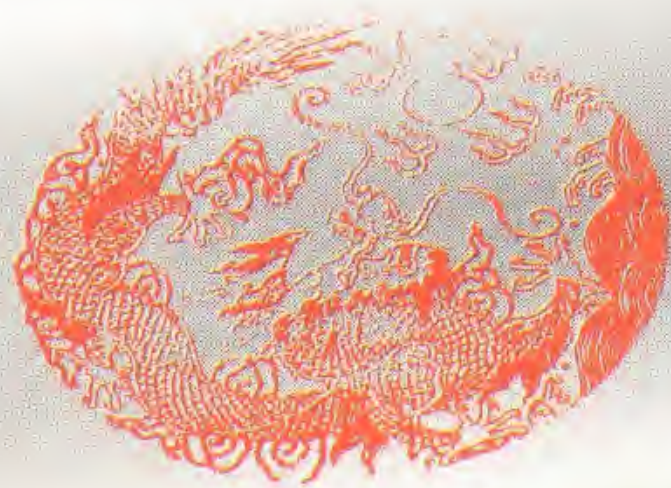
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RESTAURANT ASIA

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The Three Stars Chinese restaurant "Asia" is situated on 1, "Chiprovtsi" Str. in the center of Sofia. It disposes of 148 seats on its two floors, equipped with air-condition. All the dishes in the rich menu are specialties of the South China cuisine and are prepared by well-trained Chinese cooks. Reasonable prices for the exclusively tasty and abundant dishes. Working hours: from 11 a. m. to 11 p. m. For reservations call: ++359 2/ 315 609.

Welcome!

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HEALTH CARE

The main priority of state health policy is to restrict factors and diseases. In Bulgaria exists a well developed network of health institutions. Bulgarian medical sciences, medical education and applied health care have acknowledged achievement in a world scale.

16B, Knyaz Batenberg Str., 5 floor
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BIOINFORMATION CENTER HERMESS PRIMA



Prof. Vrabka Orbetzova: "In this period of stresses our center is aiming to help people in a sphere very difficult for medical practice, namely that's prognosis of diseases' outcome and quality of life. Our center is prognostic and provides people with biologic and social prognosis for life quality."

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24, Pozitano Str.

1000 Sofia, Bulgaria

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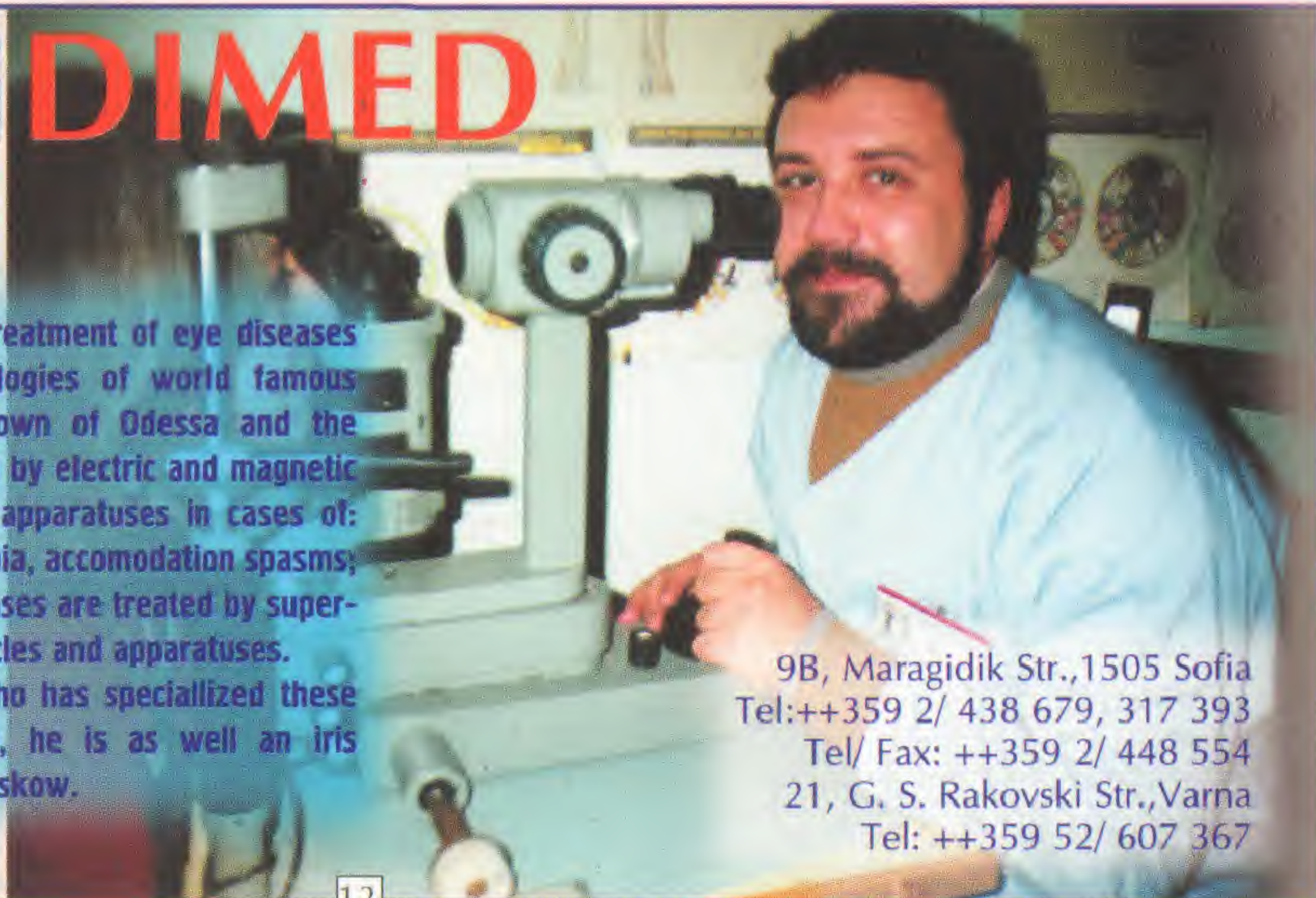
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VIDIMED

Know-how methods for treatment of eye diseases with apparatuses and after technologies of world famous institutes (Filatov Institute in the town of Odessa and the Institute of prof. Fiodorov in Moskow) by electric and magnetic stimulation with ECO-2 and FOSPEN apparatuses in cases of: retina degeneration, complicated myopia, accomodation spasms, hypermetropia, amblyopia; these diseases are treated by super-sound, lazer therapy, orthoptic spectacles and apparatuses.

Dr. Taran is an ophtalmic surgeon who has specialized these methods at Odessa Filatov Institute, he is as well an iris diagnostician and spacialized it in Moskow.



9B, Maragidik Str., 1505 Sofia

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21, G. S. Rakovski Str., Varna

Tel: ++359 52/ 607 367

Godetch Municipal Hospital

The hospital is placed in a mountainous region with ecologically pure air. It has at its disposal 40 beds, two basic wards for treatment of children and adults with internal, nervous disorders, gynecological troubles and surgical diseases. The modern equipment, the highly qualified staff and care for patients turned the hospital into a preferable medical institution.

**1, Gramada Str.
2242 Godetch, Bulgaria
Tel: ++359 729/ 2049**



AROUND SOFIA

A lot of excellent conditions for the tourist industry have been developed around Sofia. There are plenty of hotels, restaurants, motels, private quest-houses with ideal facilities for recreation and entertainment as a continuation of business contacts, giving possibility for tourists to fill bough near Sofia and far away from noise. There is nothing better than a trip out of Sofia. Just 18 km off the center of the capital is located Vitosha Mountain, offering plenty of well marked hiking trails for all levels. There are few places around Sofia with mineral water springs. Gorna Banya mineral water is one of the most delicious in Bulgaria. Twenty km from Sofia is placed town Bankya, surrounded by pine forests, it has its own 'microclimate' - the air is constantly renewing itself, and is a popular resort for health facilities. Near Sofia is 5 km long lake Pancharevo, used for boat trips, rowing, fishing and windsurfing.

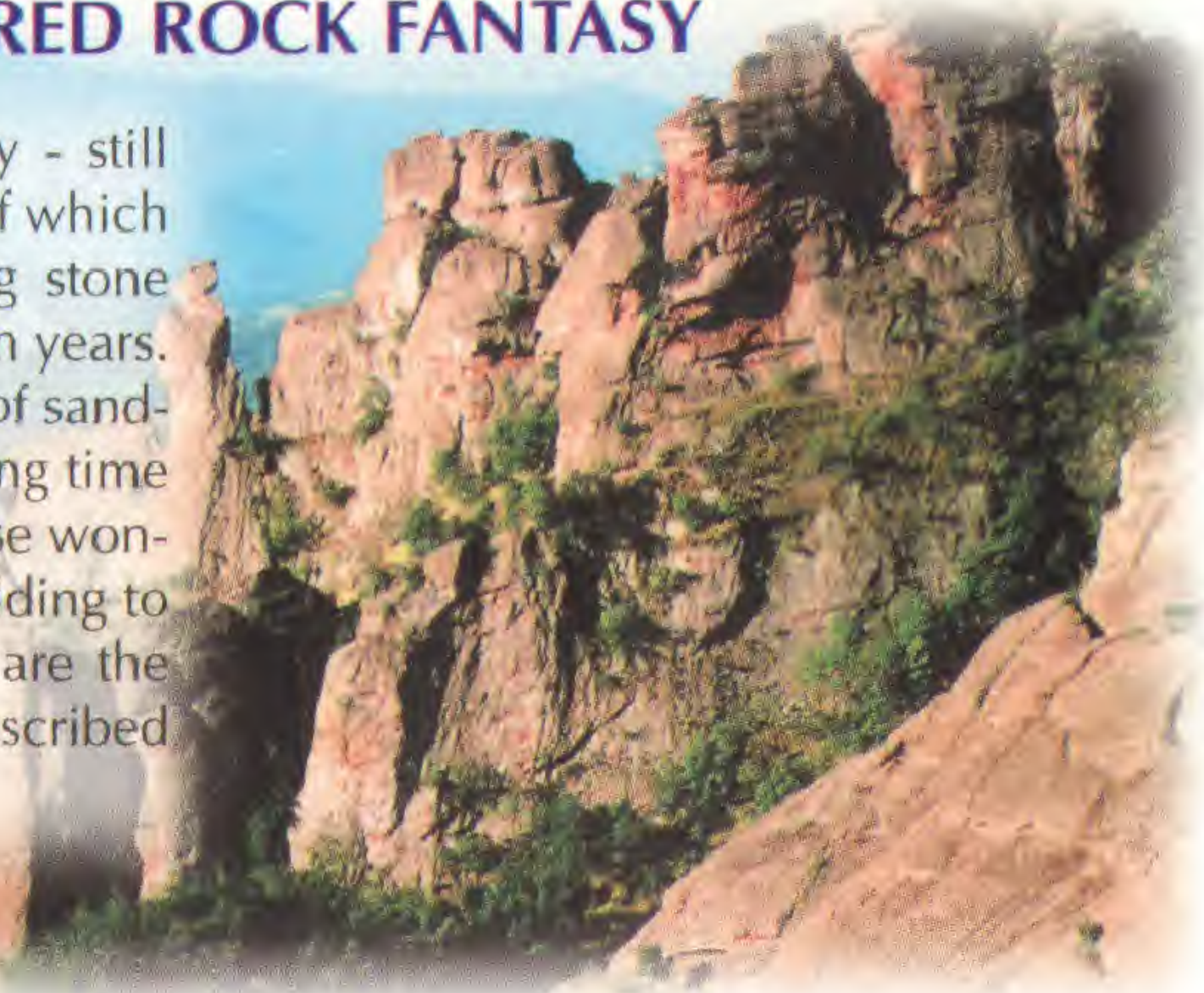
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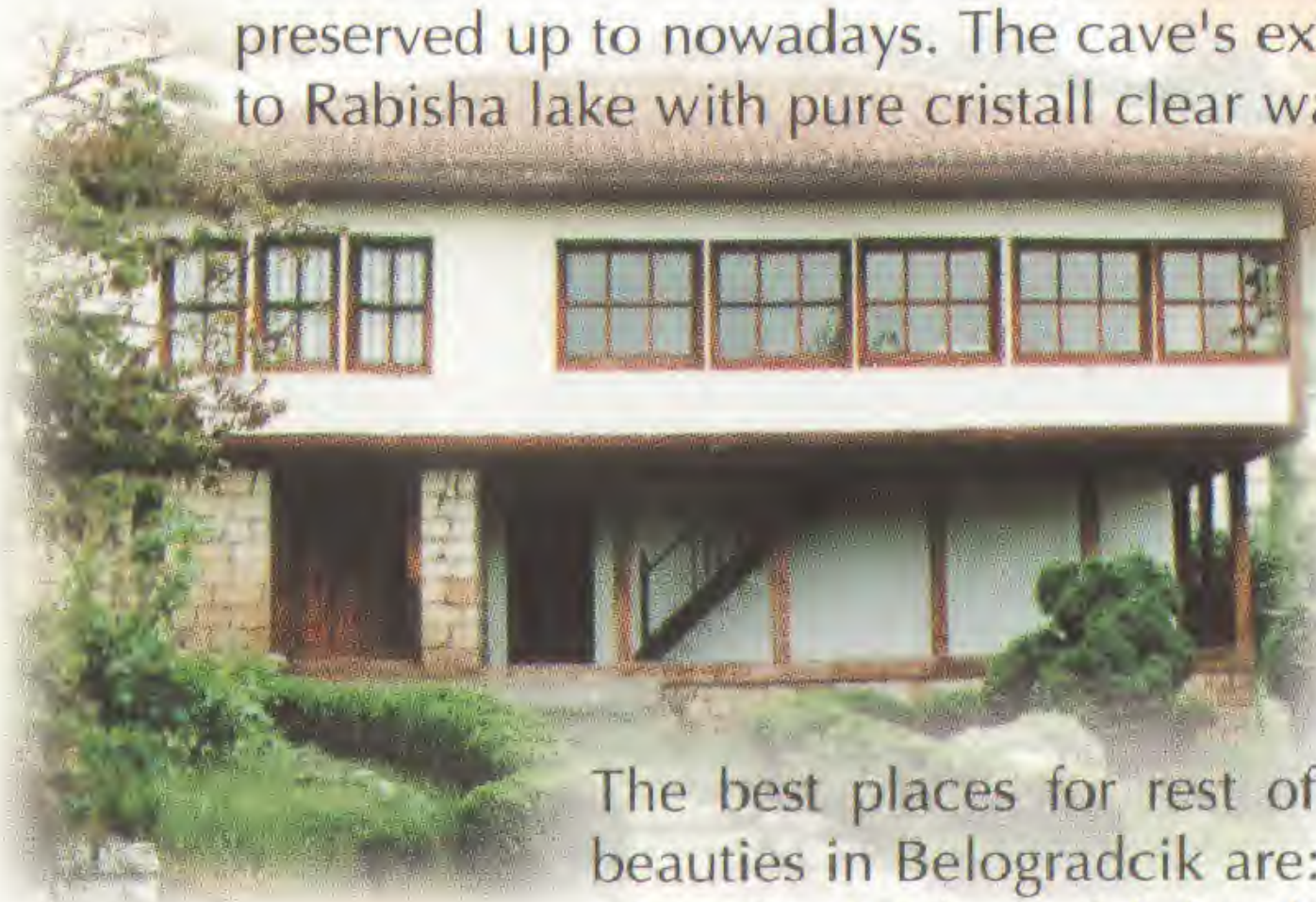
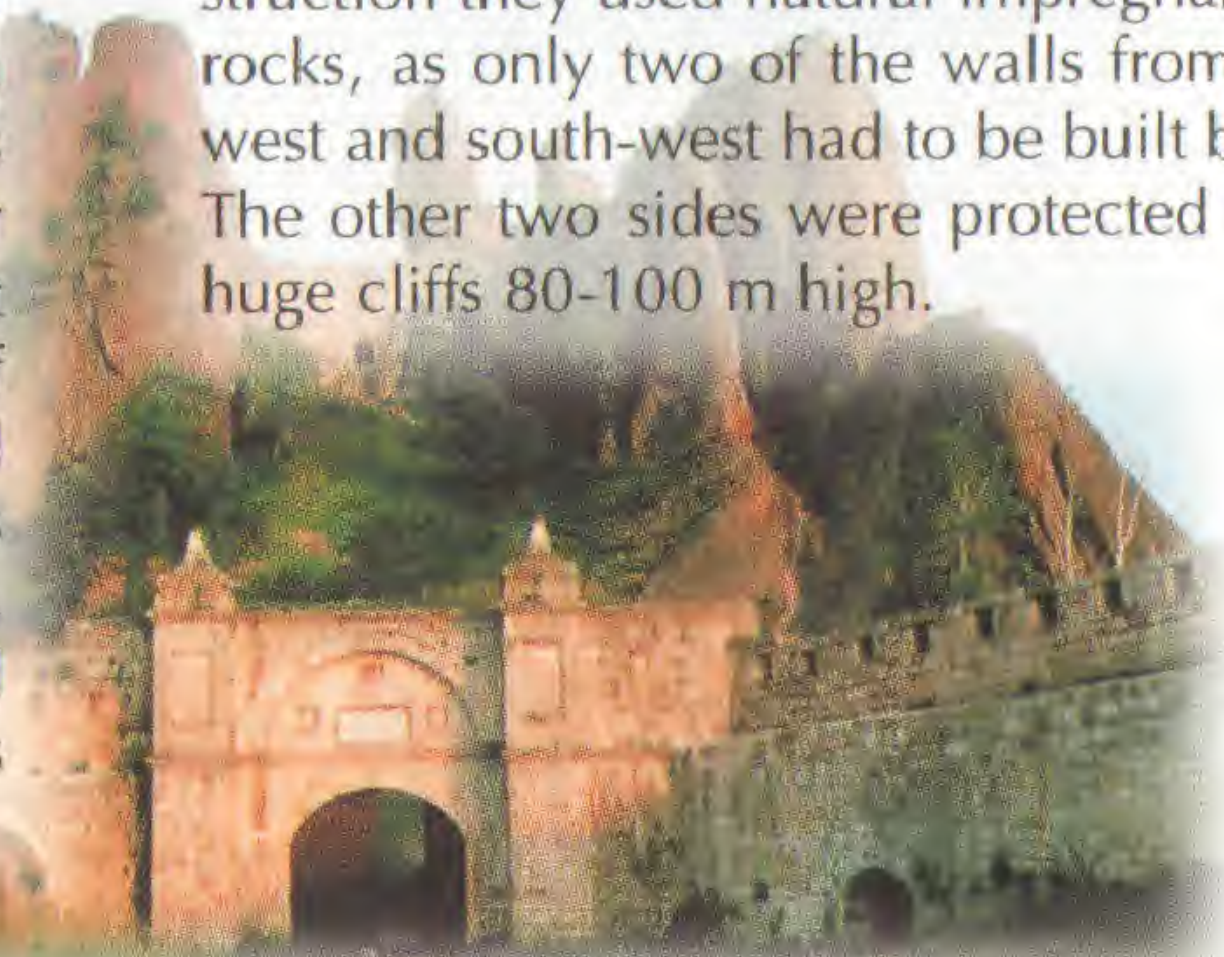
BELOGRADCHIK - THE RED ROCK FANTASY

The unique BELOGRADCHIK ROCKS are deathly - still witnesses of the history of this town, the creation of which archaeologists date about II - III A. D. Amazing stone sculptures had been carved throughout 200 million years. Their strange influence is owed to the red colour of sandstone, laid on the bottom of great ancient sea a long time ago. Years after years nature has been carving these wonderful figures. All seasons are good for tourist deciding to see this beauty of nature. A great deal of truth are the words of Konstantin Irechek: "That can not be described by words, that must be seen".



The BELOGRADCHIK FORTRESS, or "Kaleto". The present view of the castle is dated since 1808 - 1837, the historians however insist that it was founded in V - VI A. D., when Romans have been erecting with great care their fortification system. During the construction they used natural impregnability of rocks, as only two of the walls from north-west and south-west had to be built by men. The other two sides were protected by two huge cliffs 80-100 m high.

The biggest Bulgarian cave is at the foot of "The Rabishka" barrow 17 km far from Belogradchik. The total length of its corridors is over 3000 m, 1400 m of them are equipped for tourism. The precious inheritance left by ancient occupants of "Magura" are cave pictures made of red clay and bat dung. Primitive artists painted about 700 pictures. They are the only creations of primitive art since the end of the Bronze Age, with more than three thousand years' history and preserved up to nowadays. The cave's exit leads to Rabisha lake with pure cristall clear waters.



The best places for rest of tourists doing to seesight nature beauties in Belogradchik are:

Complex "Belogradchik" placed 500 m away from the town's center. It is one of the best complexes in the whole region, including a hotel (100 beds), a restaurant, cafe, night bar.

At the entrance of the cave the staff of "Magura" motel greets you with "Welcome". Both complexes are owned by "RABISHA TOURIST" Co.



RABISHA-TOURIST

Complex "Belogradchik" - Tel: ++359 936/ 33 82, 54 03 Complex "Magura" - Tel: ++359 9329/ 203

Belogradchik is located 170 km from Sofia. The famous French traveler Jerome Blanki in 1841 wrote the following about Belogradchik: "Neither majestic precipices of Olyul in Provance, nor the Pincarbo defile in Spain, nor the Alps, or the ancient Tyrol mountains in Switzerland have something that could be compared with what I have seen in Belogradchik". The town is exit point for various tourists rowds - Vidin, Chiprovtsi, Klisursky monastery, reserve "Stakevtzy", reserve "Chuprene" and many other places. The most interesting place in Vidin is a medieval Bulgarian castle "Babini Vidini kouli", build in X century. The castle is surrounded by the deep moat fill with Danube water. Chiprovtsi is famous with the gold-smithes and carpets. Reserves "Stakevtzy" and "Chuprene" offers excellent conditions for hunting and ecotourism.



VARSHETZ



VARSHETZ is placed in the northern slopes of West Balkans, 390 m above sea level. The resort is a suitable place for resting, health treatment and sporting. Its greatest wealth are the numerous mineral springs sprouting up the leaks of granite-diorite massives. The mineral water is characterized as hypothermal, of less mineral content, hydro-carbonate - sulphate, sodium, consisting of oxidizable sulphurous compounds. The balneologic resort is able to accept every year more than 150 thousand tourists and resting people. Varshetz is specialized in treatment of functional diseases of the nervous system, cardiovascular diseases, diseases of locomotory system, stabilization of diabetes.

*For contacts and cooperation: Petya Petrova - tourism expert
Varshetz municipality
Tel: ++359 9527/23 88*



Restaurant OLIMP is on the high road Sofia-Vidin, just next to Botevgrad. Offers an excellent atmosphere, tasteful meals and unforgettable experience.

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TETEVEN

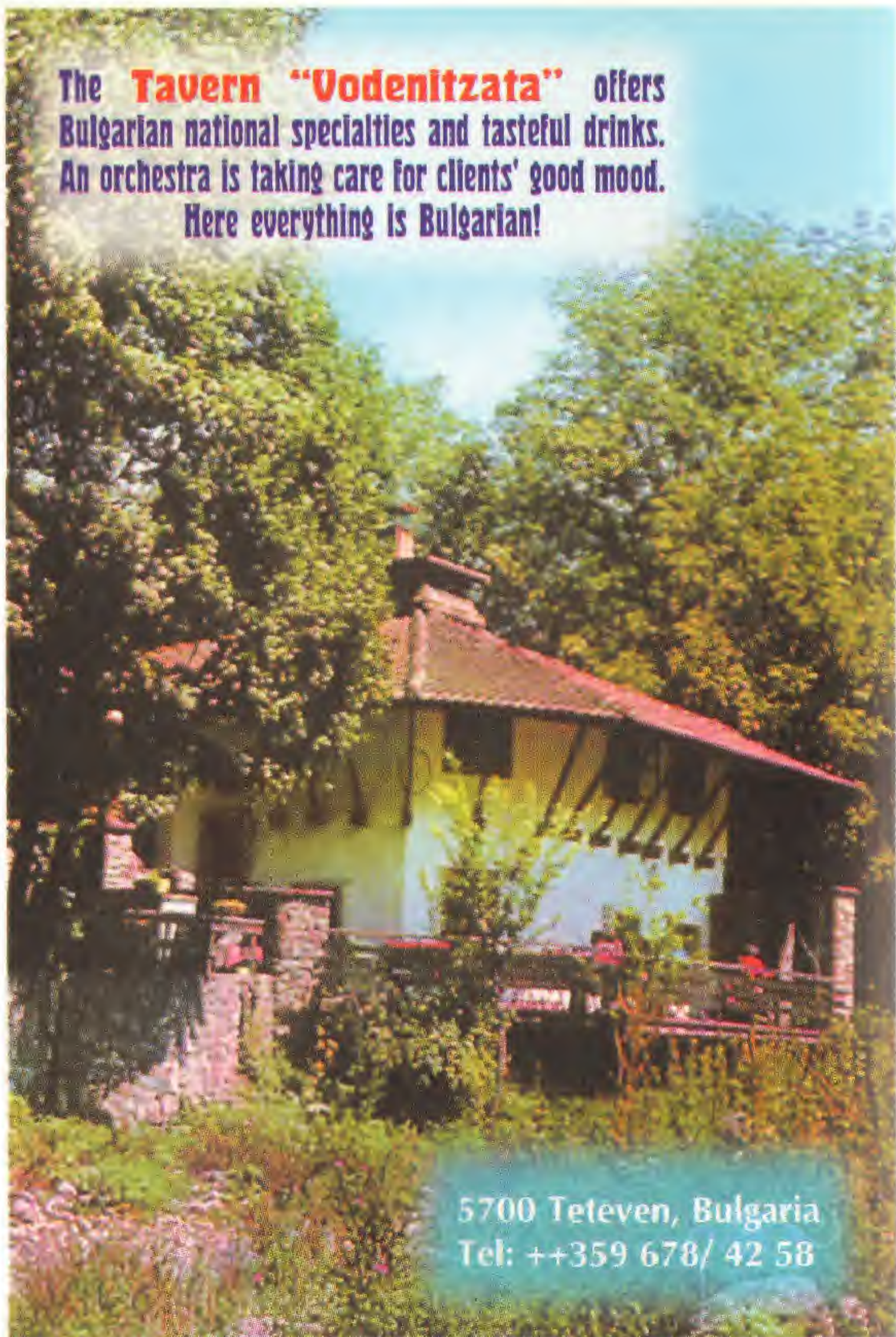
VIRGIN AND MARVELOUS NATURE

Teteven is only 120 km away from Sofia. The town grew out of a shepherds' hamlet, in the XV-th century. The houses are distinguished by their unique architecture. Near Teteven is the village of Ribaritzza. There are historical remains aged since ancient Thracians who used to inhabit the lands along the Bely Vit river valley during the VII-th century B. C.

The Balkan mountain near Teteven is well known with its remarkably grand and beautiful scenery which can be entirely enjoyed from the high peaks. There are wonderful conditions for the hunting sport in the area, more specifically rifle hunting of stags, boars, wolves, foxes and bears.

The Glozhene monastery Holy Glorious Great-Martyr George, the Conqueror and Wonder-worker, one of the miracles in the environs of Teteven. The monastery was set up in the 13 th century A. D. during the reign of tsar Ivan Asen II. The tourists visiting it daily can see the Church, the wonder-working icon of Holy Glorious Great-Martyr George, the Conqueror - preserved since the establishment of the monastery, the wood-carving of the iconostasis, the chronicle of 1823, valuable old books and many other remarkable things.

The **Tavern "Vodenitzata"** offers Bulgarian national specialties and tasteful drinks. An orchestra is taking care for clients' good mood. Here everything is Bulgarian!



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is laying at the foot of Teteven mountains and offers a base of 400 beds, including luxury flats, conference halls, restaurant, discotheque, cinema, fitness centers, physiotherapy, cosmetics, tennis courts, shooting ground, opportunities for organized tourism to Stara Planina hovels, to the cave "Saeva douпка", to "St. George the Conqueror" monastery, to the towns Teteven and Troyan. Where could you find so many services, put together, at one place? Come and see!



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PLEVEN

Pleven was established in the II century B.C. as a Thracian settlement. Later it developed as a Roman town. Through centuries the town advanced and became an important economic, administrative and cultural center. The town is famous with the severe battles in 1877. for liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman yoke. Since that period are dated a lot of monuments and museums



Pleven's Historical Museum
is one of the largest and
most abounding in unique
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Fax: ++ 359 64/ 44 230

1, Skobelev Blvd., 5800 Pleven, Bulgaria
Tel: ++359 64/ 300 90

Pleven's Museum of Arts owns stocks of over 5000 creations of paintings, engravings, sculptures and applied arts. The gallery collects, studies and makes popular creations of its patron - Iliya Beshkov - the great master of drawings and caricature.

It owns creations of West European artists, such as: Rembrandt, Adrian van Ostade, Domier, Kette Kolvitz. Unique collections of French woodcuts of the XVII century; Shona collection - stone plastics from Zimbabwe; works of the great Bulgarian artist Angel Spasov; creations of the prominent Bulgarian artists - Nikolai Pavlov, Ivan Murkvichka, Vladimir Dimitrov-Maystora, Tzeno Todorov, Stefan Ivanov, Sirak Skitnik, etc.

The Museum of arts is a place for art festivals of different countries, poetic readings and musical recitals, lectures and acquaintance with children's artistic works.

ARBANASI



Arbanasi pallas *****

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Fax: ++359 62/

621 807

Placed 3 km to the north-east of the district center of Veliko Tarnovo, situated highly on the Arbanasi plateau. Typical for the settlement are the monumental houses and churches of splendid interior decoration, wood-carvings and wall paintings, created during the XVI - XVIII centuries, as well as the fresh air and healthy climate. Besides the great number of unique culture monuments, Arbanasi offers comfortable and cosy hotels, restaurants and taverns, recreation zones, a tennis-court, etc.

Municipality

Tel:

++359 62/30 354



Restaurant Liulyaka - 70 seats

Garden - 50 seats

Offers national and European specialties, a folk program, nestinars, an evening devoted to national meals.

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Tavern Payaka

50 seats

terrace:

24 seats

Offers Bulgarian national cookings,

specialties of game, meals cooked in pots and earthen jugs.

Tel: ++359 62/ 34 257

Bolyarska house

Hotel:

5 flats

2 double

rooms

Tavern:

45 seats

Day bar:

45 seats

Summer garden with barbecue

Shop for applied arts

Tel/ Fax: ++359 62/ 20 484



Hotel Vinpallas

2 flats,
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Mobile phones: 48/ 977 517, 901 088



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Tel: ++359 62/ 23 668



VELIKO TARNOVO

The mediaeval Bulgarian capital of Veliko Tarnovo is one of the country's most scenic cities, picturesquely situated on the steep banks of the deeply cutting meanders of the Yantra river in one of the loveliest parts of the Balkan Range. Veliko Turnovo was for more than two centuries country's political and cultural center. Today it is a genuine museum under the open skies, whose numerous historic and architectural monument attract visitors. The most remarkable place is Tsarevets Hill. It is the main fortress with walls and battle towers that the royal palace and patriarchate once rose. There are lots of interesting place - the rouine of the Palace of Bulgarian Kings, the Ascension patriarchal church, the Holy Forty Martyrs Church is one of Bulgarian's most significant medieval monuments. In Veliko Tarnovo there are remarkable monuments dated since the National Revival period: churches, inns, houses and taverns. Just five kilometers from Veliko Tarnovo lies the museum villages of Arbanassi.



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E-mail: art54@tetra.bg

SILISTRA

Silistra was established at the beginning of A.D. on the groundwork of a Rome settlement and developed rapidly as an economic and cultural center on the Danube road. In IX-X centuries here was placed the residence of the Bulgarian patriarch. The town is abounding in architecture monuments since the Rome empire. Extremely beautiful and unique is the ancient vault since the IV century.

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RILA MOUNTAINS

HIGHEST AND MOST IMPRESSIVE

RILA Mountains are probably the best known and most frequently visited range. They have a rugged, alpine beauty, with rocky ridges and bristling peaks plunging precipices and a host of sparkling lakes (more than 180) and streams. In Rila Mountains is the highest peak on the Balkan Peninsula - the Mousala peak (2925 m).

HOTEL



You are welcome to Victoria Hotel chain! We offer favourable conditions for unforgettable experience! We offer you double rooms and apartments with all modern conveniences. In Borovets is offered a Finnish sauna, fitness centre, tangentor tubs, professional massage, a comfortable tavern. The ancient quarter of Nessebar is comfortable in hot and cold weather. You'll have at your disposal a mini-bus in order to reach any desired places in Bulgaria.

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Tel: ++359 2/ 596 159, 595 009
Mobile phone: 48/ 958 478



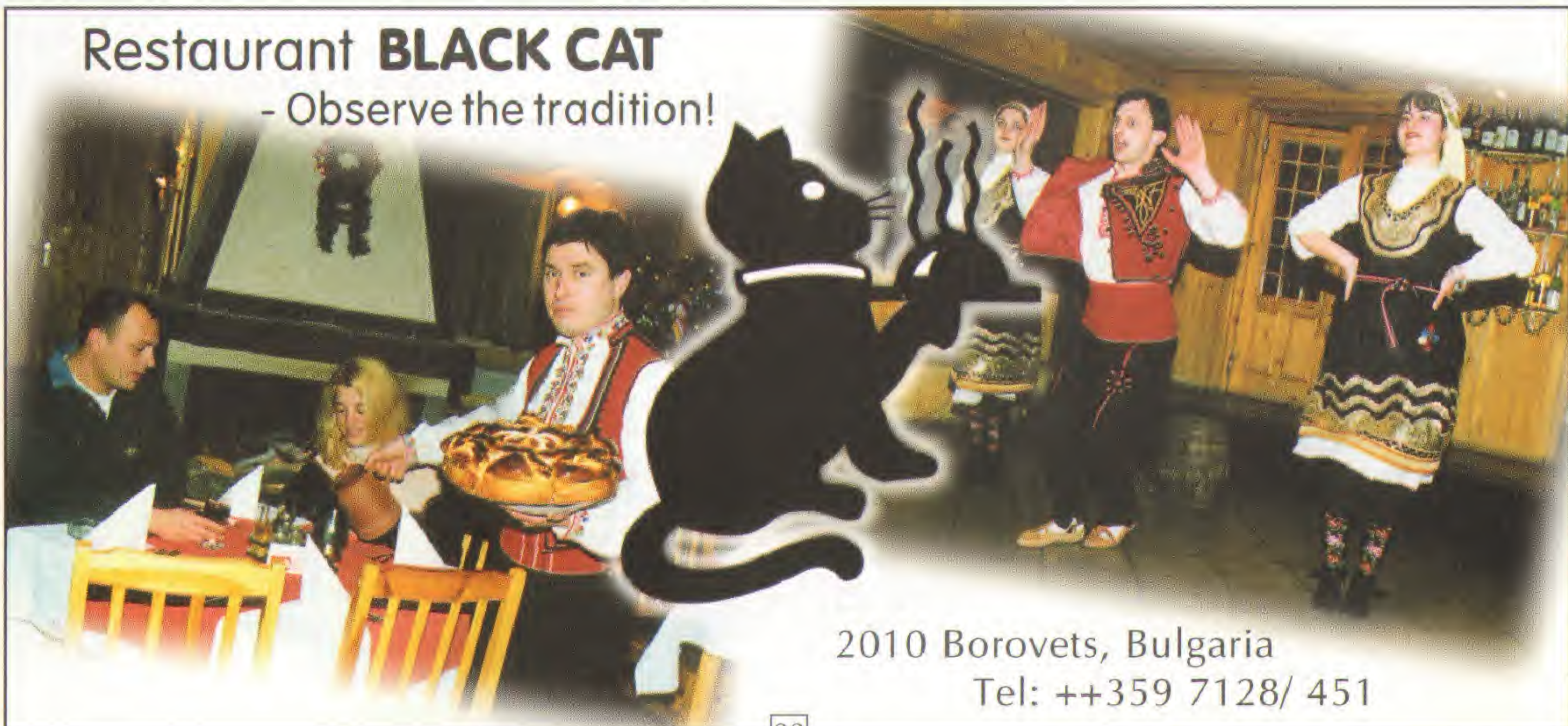
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SKI AND HOLIDAY PARADISE

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They are situated in a venerable pine forest. You will find luxurious holiday villages with one and two-storey wooden houses polish type with all facilities - bathroom, living room with SAT TV, kitchen, dining room. The tourist have at their disposal restaurants, coffee bar/night club, various shops in the resorts, giving wide choice of food products to the tourists, who prefer to prepare their own food.



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ST. IVAN
HOTEL
RILSKI



The complex has hotel with 104 beds, fine restaurant, day bar, sport center comprises a billiard club, massage parlour for manual and water-jet massage, fitness hall and sauna. Hotel guests can enjoy the national history collection, hunting exhibition, historical museum. St. Ivan Rilski is the only hotel in the complex to offer unforgettable experiences such as archery, carriage and sledge riding, horse riding, visits to village cottages. Hotel St. Ivan Rilski is the very place you want to visit. Here you will become one with the mountain and enjoy a unique beauty spot in Rilla.

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Hotel Ela

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The Ela is a cozy, well-designed hotel with a good selection of facilities and its location makes it a popular choice for clients. Located in the heart of the resort, with a two-minute walk to the gondola station. Hotel Ela ideal for the keen skier. There is a restaurant, bar and downstairs tavern.



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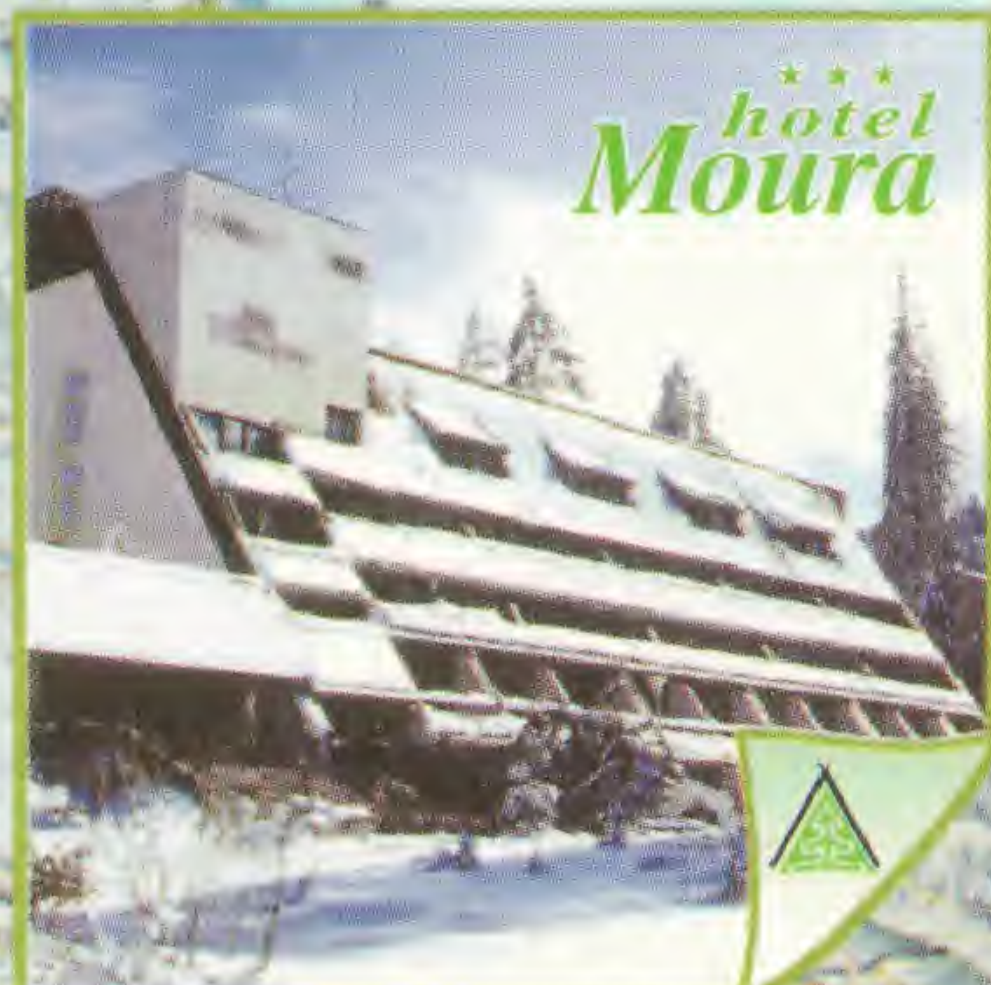
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— SAMOKOV —

Samokov is a town with rich past and traditions. It is located only 10 km from Borovets - on the road to Sofia. There are numerous cultural and historic monuments in the town. This will enable to get in touch with the authentic atmosphere of Samokov. It is the birthplace of personalities who have made a decisive contribution to Bulgarian progress.



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— RILA MONASTERY —

RILA Monastery - founded in the X century. The monastery is closely connected with the spiritual history of Bulgarians today. Step by step generations of the best artists - wood-carvers and painters took part in its construction to create Monastery of today.

The most valuable historical and architectural monuments preserved in the monastery are: "The Hrelyova Tower" and the five-domed church "The Assumption" which preserved valuable mural painted. World famous is the library containing the richest collection of ancient manuscripts and documents and icons on the Balkan Peninsula. The library's 16 000 volumes of ancient books and 134 manuscripts from the XV to the XIX centuries are of great interest. The galleries with their exquisite arches, pillars and vaults are richly decorated with beautiful wood-carvings and murals.



PIRIN

MOUNTAIN OF GODS

Pirin Mountain are natural reserve included in the UNESCO list of World Natural Heritage Sites. They are one of the most beautiful spots on Earth. The 100 peaks over 2000 meters, the 186 high mountain lakes, the rich flora (over 1089 species) and the variety of fauna (172 mammal species) represent nature's generosity. Lovers of nature and winter sports are heartily welcome to the net-work of huts, departmental holiday homes, fine hotels, restaurants and traditional taverns in the mountain, towns and villages of the region. Furthermore, the Pirin region has preserved its fascinating folklore traditions and customs, architectural monuments and designated reserved villages, houses and churches from the National Revival Period and archeological sites from all ages.



BANSKO

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Bansko is a climatic health resort, located 165 km from Sofia. Situated at the foot of Northern Pirin Mountains. It is an extremely popular tourist centre visited all year round by lovers of nature and winter sport as well as a great number of visitors who flock to admire the traditional Bulgarian architecture, culture and mode of life.

While wandering through Bansko's quiet streets guests will find at their end the persistent background of Pirin's peaks emanating their magnetic appeal. They will feel like getting closer to this dream-like scene and becoming a part of it. Here is the domain of the highest peaks, the venerable white firs, the edelweiss and the wild goats. Variety of ski-runs, activities like hiking, snow-shoeing, biking, bird-watching wait it's guests.



★★★ Hotel Spetsialista

We offer you magnificent holidays with possibilities for skiing, alpinism, hunting, fishing and mountain trips. Barbecue is the hotel's show and you can taste local delicacies after Bulgarian traditional recipes.

The hotel is situated at the entrance of the Pirin National Park.

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*** Aneli hotel

1, Tzar Simeon Blvd.
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- Excellent location
- Cozy rooms and suites accommodate - 150 persons - mountain view
- Facilities: Phone and SAT TV
- Restaurant-tavern, day bar, night-club, picnicbar at 2 km from Bansko
- Swimming pool, fitness-center, sauna, shop
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- Entertainment and excursions

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We offer you apartments and rooms. For your entertainment are available ski-teachers, ski-on rent, transfer to the ski-tracks. If you prefer the warmth of the fireplace come to our tavern. We offer you winter garden with a view towards the mountain, barbecue, cafe-bar and others.

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MELNIK
BUILT IN HARMONY
WITH NATURE

Melnik is one of the smallest towns in Bulgaria. It's located in Pirin mountains amidst picturesque and weird stone pyramids. The houses built in harmony with nature, preserve the best of Bulgarian architecture. Melnik is world famous with heavy red Melnik wine, that matures in its caves and cellars.



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GOTZE DELCHEV

Gotze Delchev is situated in the vales of Mesta river between the Rhodops and Pirin. History, nature's generosity and people's hard work have blessed this place with countless gifts. Gotze Delchev is starting point for visiting historical jewels. The village of Kovachevitza has preserved the specific National Revival Architecture. The village is ideal for cultural visits and peaceful recreation among houses in a traditional style. Leshten has been developed into a well established holiday village for rural tourism. Near Gotze Delchev is Papazchair - an ideal place for summertime mountain recreation.



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THE RHODOPES

AN EVERLASTING MAGNIFICENCE

In Bulgarian landscape the Rhodope Mountains are charming, everlasting and intransigent. Their melodious name comes 13 centuries B.C. The Slav settlers (5th century) named them Slaveevi planini (Nightingale mountains), as here echo resounds like warbling of nightingales. Ancient Greek legends narrate that the Rhodopes are the homeland of sweet-voiced Orpheus.

The Rhodopes are low, they elevate above sea level at the rate of 765 m. In both basic parts - East and West Rhodopes, mountain hills are with even ridges and inclined steep, covered by virgous forests of pines, fir-trees, spruces and junipers, by spacious carpets of flowers. The valleys of Vutcha, Chepelarska, Chepinska, Arda, Dospat, Stara reka and other rivers form picturesque defiles and attractive valleys and pans, easy to cross in all directions. The artificial lakes "Kardjali", "Stouden kladenetz" and "Ivailovgrad" are suitable for sailing on boats and small ships, for fishing, etc.

A network of roads makes possible the free access to the mountains throughout the whole year. Climate is well-balanced - winter is mild and summer is fresh as a result of White sea air flows. Lavish aerosol radiating from the coniferous massives and flower glades glorify the Rhodopes as an effective climatic medical region. There are either mineral springs with mineral baths and sanatoriums in Velingrad (more than 70), Narechen, Banite village, Bratzigovo, Mihalkovo.

In the Rhodopes there exist excellent conditions for winter sports and tourism. The main places for ski-races are Chepelare and Pamporovo. Pamporovo is the sunniest Bulgarian winter resort and furthest to the south ski center in Europe with 34 km long-distance running tracks and 5 chair lifts & tows. Altitude of the resorts is 1650 m.



Hotel MARKONY

Enjoy the pleasant atmosphere and cosiness of our hotel, where you will ski from door to door. It has an ideal location, just minutes from the 3 main chair lifts.

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- spacious sunny terrace
- ski school
- ski rent
- ski service
- ski shop

4870 Pamporovo, Bulgaria
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Fax: ++359 3021/ 391



30

The informative tourism in Rhodopes has projects without any analogues: the Assenova fortress since the 13th century, Bachkovski monastery (built up in 1083. by the Georgian Grigoriy Bakuriany), the magnificent and authentic Rhodopes' houses, the hand woven variegated "felts", fleecy rugs, rag-carpets, tufted rugs, the wrought copper home utensils, the goat-bells and cow-bells - that is the picture of the Rhodopes' charm which is never-ending.

It is a matter of fact that one of the biggest attractions here are the rapacious birds and some of them have taken their last refuge here after the drastic environment changes, due to human activities in the recent years. As well as more than 1500 vegetation kinds are widely distributed, among them 25 types of orchids, and they are not less interesting and worth.

Bulgarian specialists have developed unique chances for echo-tourism. Some of the most interesting trips are organized in the region of the town of Madjarovo. That is the only place in Bulgaria where can be observed white head vultures. The region of Madjarovo is either famous with the abundance of 160 minerals, so are organized geologic mineralogical tours.

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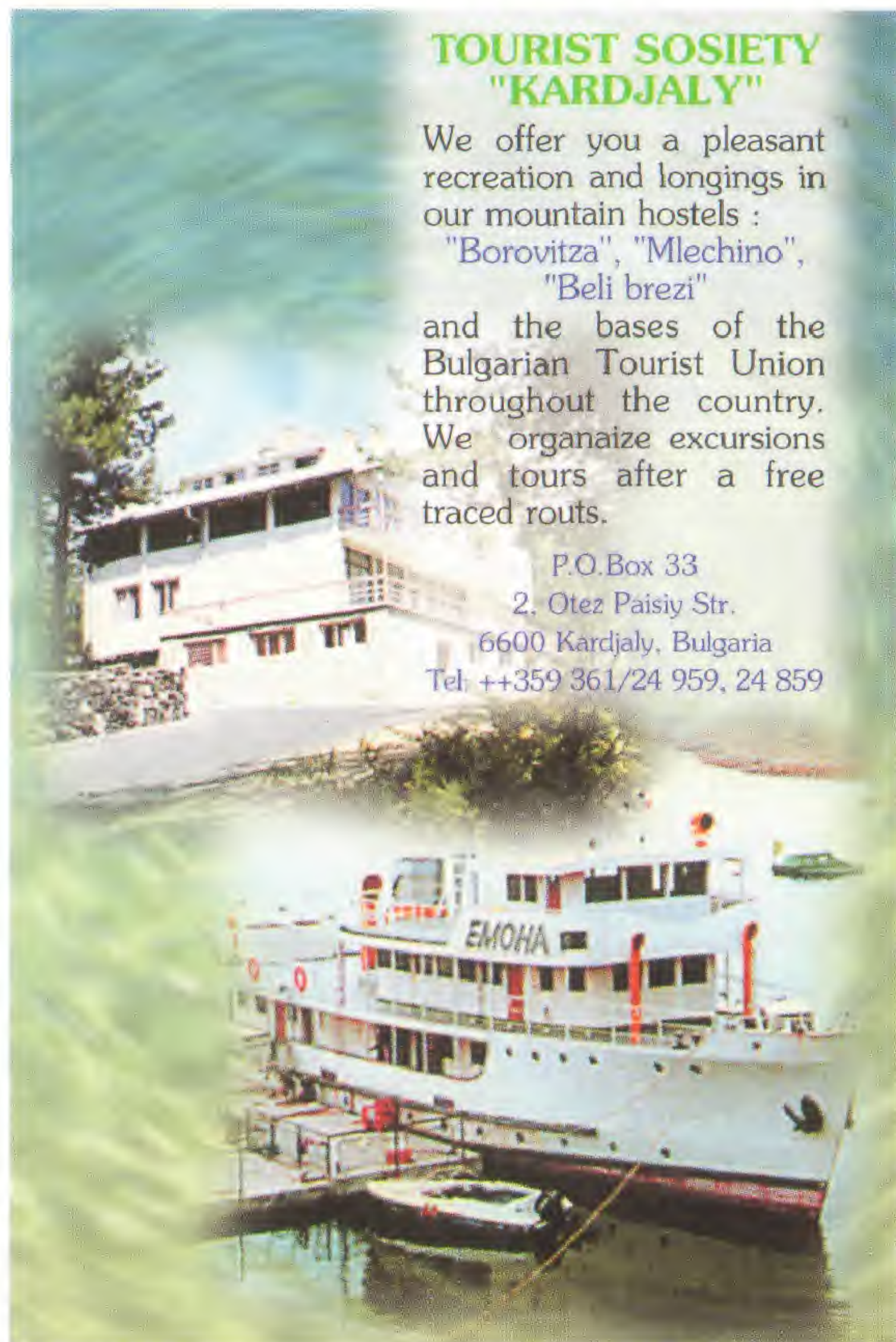
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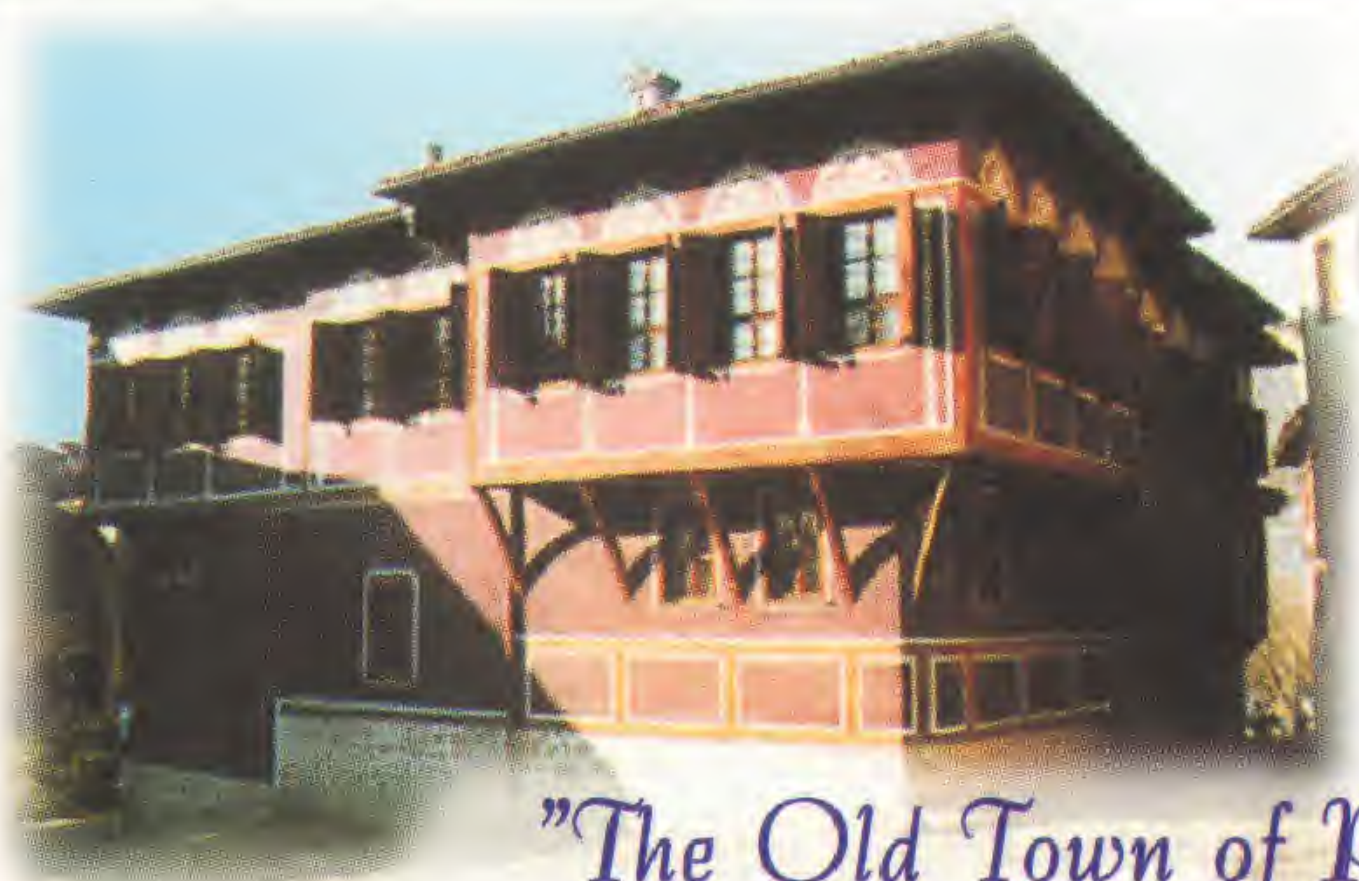
Velingrad, Bulgaria

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PLOVDIV EXPLICIT REFLECTION OF PAST AGES

Plovdiv is situated on Maritza river-banks, the town originates since the 6th century B.C. In Roman times the town developed and was fortified with fortifications. It grew into an administrative centre in Thracian lands and coined its own money. The town marked real progress during the Renaissance. In Plovdiv are perfectly preserved beautiful ancient monuments and buildings - mute witnesses of bygone stormy days. Very attractive is the ancient Roman amphitheatre with its stately marble statues, decorative columns and arcades. Plovdiv is not only a centre of Bulgarian architecture of the XIX century, but a vital modern town.



"The Old Town of Plovdiv" JSC.

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HISSAR

THE LIFE-GIVING WATER

HISSAR

Many, many years ago, the Roman emperor Diocletian found out a beautiful piece of verdant valley on Thracian land, having hot springs, far, away from overpopulated Rome and gave orders for some magnificent castles, baths and medical stations to be built. This was the birth of the ancient town of Augusta built in honour of the emperor's beloved wife.

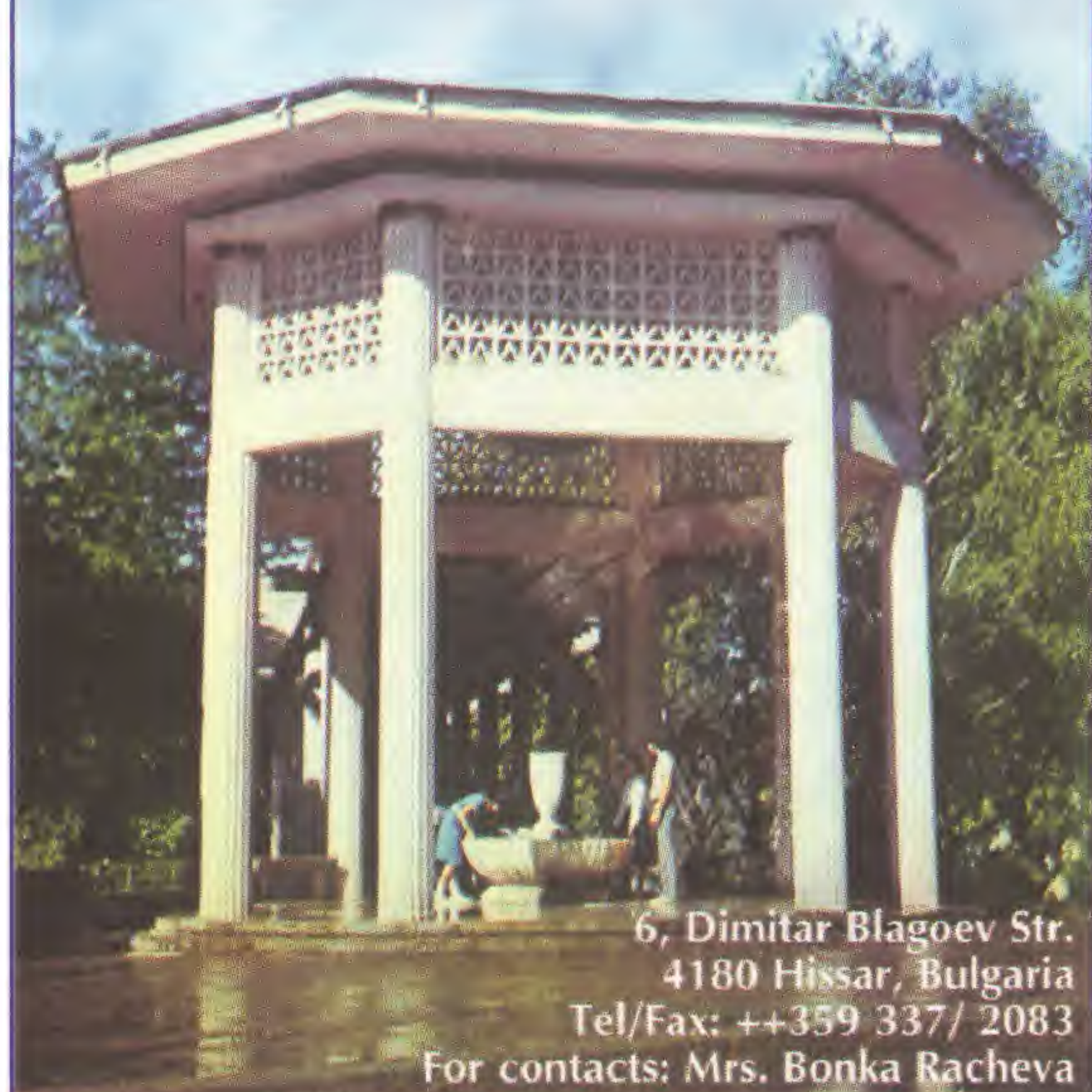
Today, one extremely modern palace of health bears the town of Augusta and this medical centre offers a variety of rehabilitation and cosmetic programmes on a world level.

The combination of fresh air, silence and the complete course of balneological treatment and physiotherapy provides cure for both - body and soul.

The springs have sodium hydrocarbonate mineralization, rich in fluorine, metasilicic acid and radon.

Fundamentally, Hissar is a spa health centre for urological, bile, liver and stomach diseases.

URBANIZATION AND MUNICIPAL CONSTRUCTION



6, Dimitar Blagoev Str.

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Tel/Fax: ++359 337/ 2083

For contacts: Mrs. Bonka Racheva

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If you do not need medical treatment you can merely enjoy silence and peace in the same way as the Roman aristocrats did back in the ancient times.

3, Gourko Str.
4180 Hissar, Bulgaria
Tel: ++359 337/ 38 21, 38 11
Fax: ++359 337/ 38 15
e-mail: augusta@bse.bg



*** hotel
AUGUSTA





PAVEL BANYA

Municipality

15, Osvobozhdenie Str.

Tel: ++359 4361/ 2260, 3260

Fax: ++359 4361/ 2094

The resort of Pavel Banya is situated in the very heart of the beautiful Rose Valley between the Balkan range and Sredna Gora mount, 180 km off Sofia along the highway to the Southern Black sea coast and the town of sea level.

The resort has moderate continental climate and is found at an altitude of 382 m above sea level.

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foto: L. Andreev

— NESSEBAR —

CHARMING FISHING TOWN

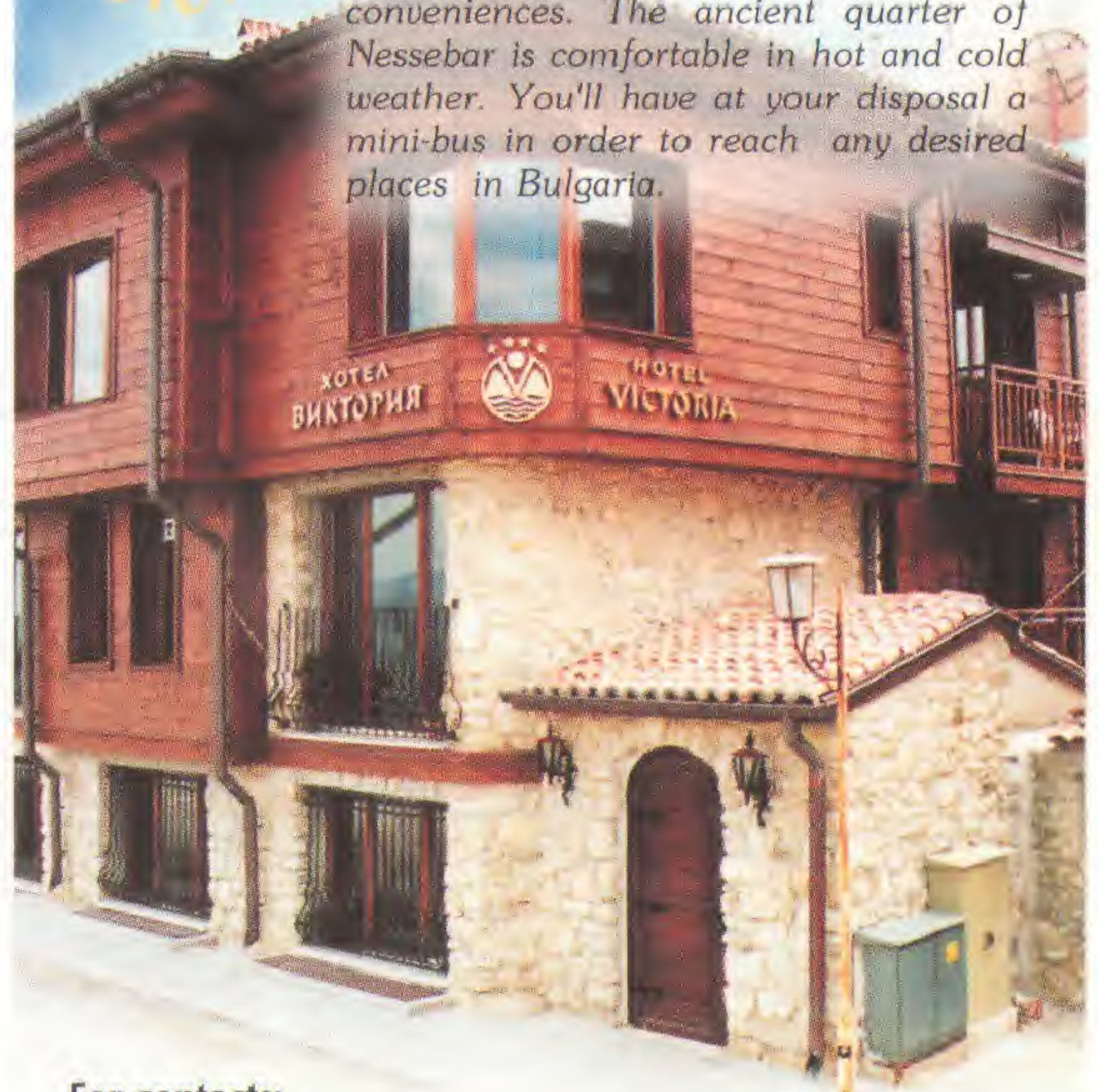
Nessebar is one of the oldest towns in Europe. It sits on a small rocky peninsula at about 30 km from Bourgas. The town is incredible combination of natural beauty and rich history. The old quarter is under a preservation order as a living museum town, housing the remains of some 40 churches from different periods of history. Nessebar is an ideal place for guests looking for a seaside vacation in a typical Bulgarian town.

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DISCOVER THE FASCINATION OF THE NATURE MONUMENTS

In Bulgaria there are lots of Nature Monuments, which are oasis amidst civilization. They are protected areas and last recess of wild nature. Some of the most beautiful places are as follows:

DURANKULAK LAKE is a coastal lake of natural origin lying in an old river bed. It is surrounded by arable land and steppe areas. The whole open water area, the marshy south-eastern part of the lake and the two islands are included in the Nature Monument Durankulak Lake, with a total area of 350 ha. Seventy-six bird species build their nests and raise their young in the area, including the Ferruginous Duck, the Bittern, the Marsh Harrier, the Collared Pratincole and the Stone-curlew. The lake is one of the few places in Europe where the Paddyfield Warbler, a typical Asian species, can be seen. There is a great variety waterfowl in winter, but the greatest attraction are the thousands of geese taking off the lake early in the morning.

SHABLA LAKE is listed as a European Important Bird Area. The lakes host more than 10 highly threatened plants, including the beautiful Yellow Water lilies. Three rare fish species and the endangered European Otter also find refuge there. But among the whole variety of plants and animals, birds are Shabla's most prominent inhabitants. Over 80 bird species breed in Shabla, the most interesting of them being the Bittern, the Marsh Harrier and the Kentish Plover. The lakes are even more important during migration and winter. In winter at sunrise, the sky is filled with the cackling and wing swish of thousands of geese flying off to feed in the surrounding fields. Every year in winter many swans, ducks and over 100,000 geese migrate from Siberia over there. These are mainly White-fronted Geese, but thousands of the globally threatened Red-breasted Goose are also to be seen among them.

Whooper Swans. /Photo: S. Dereliev/



White-headed Duck. /Photo: S. Dereliev/



European Pond Terrapin. /Photo: L. Andreev/



Wolf Spider. /Photo: G. Tsonev/



Iris (Iris suaveolens). /Photo: L. Andreev/



The region around the **KAMCHIA** river mouth is remarkable for its variety - unique flooded forest of a riverine type called "Longoz" (their ancient name in Bulgarian), wide beaches with high sand dunes, fresh water marshes and marshy remnants of old river beds, called "Azmaks", cutting deep into the forest. The unusual co-existence of ash, oak, elm, alder and maple trees with all kinds of lianas climbing between their branches, creates the impression of a tropical forest. The Summer Showflake, several Buttercup species and the beautiful White and Yellow Water Lilies in the Azmaks make the scenery even more enchanting. A lot of rare and interesting birds - the Black Stork, the Hobby, the Lesser Spotted Eagle, the Goshawk, the Black and the Grey-headed Woodpeckers, the Semicollared Flycatcher, etc. breed in the area. With its diverse nature the region provides habitats for rare and endangered reptiles and amphibians, as well as for many interesting mammals, including the endangered European Otter.

ATANASOVSKO LAKE is a hypersaline coastal lake, most of which has been transformed into salt-works. It is surrounded by fresh water marshes and swamps, as well as a system of channels overgrown with reeds and other marsh vegetation. The lake is the richest ornithological site in Bulgaria, with more than 290 bird species breeding, roosting, wintering or migrating over, including many rare and endangered ones. Many Shelducks, waders and terns nest on the banks, or in the glasswort and on the sand. Atanasovsko lake is a spectacular sight during autumn migration, when thousands of waterfowl, song-birds and birds of prey fly over or rest there, following the famous migratory route called from ancient times the "Via Pontica". The lake regularly records the highest number of migrating Dalmatian and White Pelicans in Europe and holds "second place" for the number of migrating White Storks and Lesser Spotted Eagles seen. In winter, the lake is still populated with numerous birds - visitors from Northern Europe and Asia. Other animals are less conspicuous and are only studied by experts. But they all play an important role in the ecosystems, as prey or predator, from the Shrew to the Jackal.

Rhinoceros beetle. (Photo: G. Tsonev)



Summer Snowflake



Eastern Spadefoot. (Photo: L. Andreev)



Collared Plover. (Photo: M. Dimitrov)



Lesser Spotted Eagle. (Photo: L. Andreev)



The protected area **PODA** includes about 100 ha fresh and salt water pools at the westernmost limit of Bourgas Bay. More than 200 plant species have been found growing on comparatively small extent of the protected area, 4 of them listed in the Bulgarian Red Data Book. The 20 Dragonfly species, the Caucasian Goby, the Three-spined Stickleback, the Four-lined Snake and the European Otter are all rare species adding to the diversity of animal life in PODA. The reeds and the glasswort are swarming with life. Among them are hidden the nests of a mixed colony of Spoonbills, Herons and Egrets, Little and Common Terns, Black-winged Stilts and Avocets. Totally 226 bird species have been recorded in the PODA. In winter or during migration periods globally threatened birds, like the White-headed Duck, the Ferruginous Duck, the Dalmatian Pelican and the Pygmy Cormorant can also be seen in the area.

The region around the **ROPOTAMO** river mouth is a unique combination of natural elements and ecosystems - coastal cliffs, sand dunes and beaches, dry and flooded forests, rivers and coastal marshes covering over 5000 ha. With curtains of lianas hanging from branches and screening the sunshine above White and Yellow Water Lilies, the scenery is almost unreal. Over 50 plant species listed in the Bulgarian Red Data Book have found refuge in the complex's comparatively small area. Several of them are endangered in an European scale. With its diverse habitats, the reserves of the area provide food and shelter for many interesting birds in all seasons: totally 232 birds species have been recorded there, including seven that are globally threatened. Some particularly rare mammals like the European Otter and several species of bats also occur there. The area of cape Maslen Nos was one of the last known habitats of the almost extinct now Mediterranean Monk Seal. There are also insects, reptiles, amphibians, fishes and other forms of animal life.

For further information about oases of wild nature in Bulgaria visitors can contact with:



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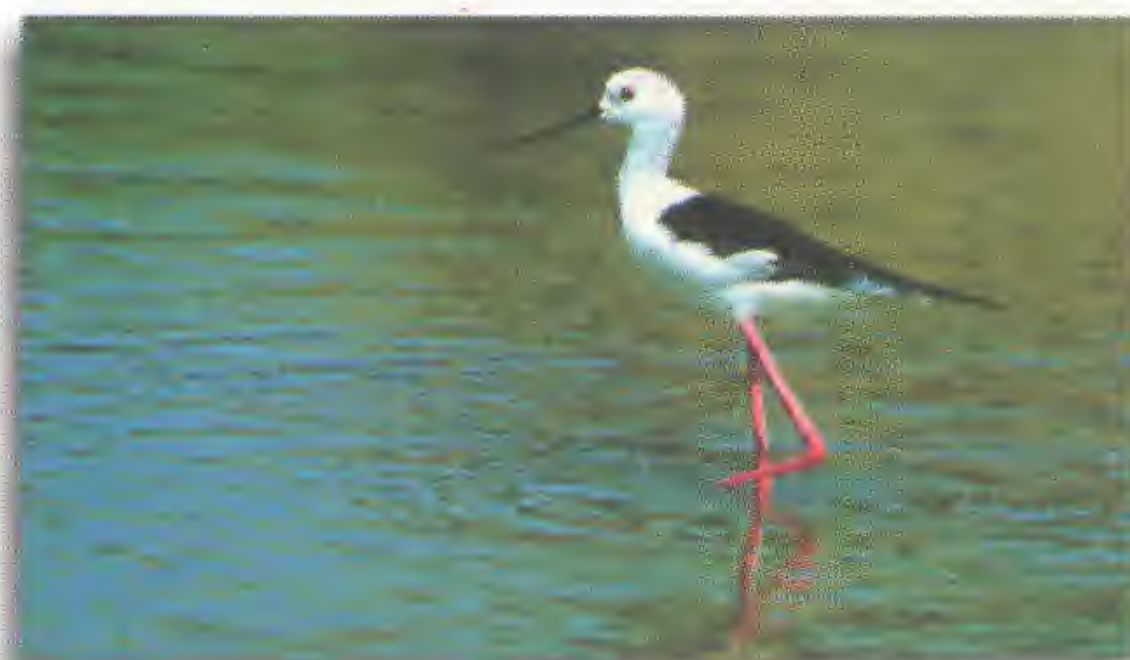


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Buzzard. /Photo: G. Tsonev/



Black-winged Stilt. /Photo: L. Andreev/



Grass Snake. /Photo: L. Andreev/



Hen Harrier. /Photo: L. Andreev/



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